



**EGUARANTEERING THE FUTURE:
EMPOWERING SKILLS FOR RESILIENT FINANCE IN THE
EURO-MEDITERRANEAN**
BY PROF. RYM AYADI

Guaranteeing the Future: Empowering Skills for Resilient Finance in the Euro-Mediterranean

Speech at the 5th Annual Conference of the Euro-Mediterranean Guarantee Network

By Prof. Rym Ayadi, Founder and President of Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA)

It is an honor to address you today on a critical issue that lies at the heart of our shared mission—how skill development can enhance the impact of guarantee schemes in times of heightened uncertainty.

The Euro-Mediterranean region is navigating a complex landscape. Global economic shifts, geopolitical tensions, and climate risks are testing the resilience of businesses and financial systems alike. SMEs, the backbone of our economies, are facing unprecedented challenges in accessing finance, while financial institutions are grappling with risk management in an increasingly volatile environment.

Guarantee schemes have long served as a bridge—de-risking investment, unlocking capital, and fostering economic dynamism. But to maximize their effectiveness, we must recognize a key ingredient that is often overlooked: skills.

First, financial literacy and risk management skills among entrepreneurs and SMEs are crucial. Without the knowledge to structure viable business plans and manage credit effectively, even the best-designed guarantee mechanisms may fall short. Integrating financial education into

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guarantee programs can enhance the success rate of investments and strengthen repayment capacity.

Second, capacity building within financial institutions and guarantee providers is essential. Guarantee mechanisms are evolving, incorporating blended finance, digital innovations, and sustainability-linked criteria. Strengthening expertise in these areas will ensure that guarantee providers can adapt their tools to support businesses in the green and digital transitions.

Third, we must invest in upskilling for the workforce of tomorrow. Economic uncertainty is often exacerbated by skills mismatches. Guarantee schemes can play a catalytic role in financing skill development programs, particularly in emerging fields such as green jobs, digital industries, and neurotechnology—areas that will define the future competitiveness of the Euro-Mediterranean region.

This is precisely where the Euro-Mediterranean Guarantee Network (EMGN) plays a pivotal role. EMGN, under the co-leadership of the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA), fosters regional cooperation and capacity building by connecting guarantee institutions, financial intermediaries, and policymakers. Through knowledge-sharing, training programs, and technical assistance, EMGN strengthens the ability of guarantee schemes to support SMEs and entrepreneurs across the region. By promoting best practices and innovative financing models, the network ensures that guarantee providers are equipped to respond effectively to economic shocks and long-term structural transformations.

At the Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association, we believe in an integrated approach. Guarantee schemes must not only de-risk finance but also de-risk the future—by equipping businesses, financial institutions, and workers with the skills to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Let us work together to design smarter guarantee mechanisms—ones that not only mobilize capital but also invest in human potential.

By doing so, we will not only enhance financial inclusion but also build a more resilient, innovative, and sustainable Euro-Mediterranean economy.

Thank you.

Prof. Rym Ayadi - President, Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association (EMEA)

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The [Euro-Mediterranean Guarantee Network -EMGN](#) organised its 5th Annual Conference to provide a platform for stakeholders to explore strategies and best practices for better integrating local credit guarantees into the international and national financial systems of Mediterranean countries.

The event was co-organised by [TAMWILCOM](#), the [European Institute of the Mediterranean \(IEMed\)](#), the [Euro-Mediterranean Economists Association - EMEA](#) and the MED Confederation, and took place on 20 February 2025, in Rabat.

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